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UNCLAS VILNIUS 001004

SIPDIS

STATE FOR L/LEI--K. PROPP AND M. GUILANI AND EUR/NB
JUSTICE FOR OIA--D. GAYNUS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: EXTRADITION REQUEST FOR DARIUS RAMANAUSKAS

REF: STATE 170839

1. This cable addresses reftel request for information regarding the extradition of Lithuanian citizen Darius Ramanauskas on narcotics charges. Post assesses the likelihood that Lithuanian authorities might use torture to extract testimony from Ramanauskas as highly doubtful, especially given the public nature of the Daktaras case. We note that the Lithuanian constitution specifically prohibits torture, as well as inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The USG's Lithuania Country Report on Human Rights Practices points out that the police at times beat or otherwise physically mistreated detainees, but that the number of such reported incidents has declined over the past few years. We note further that we have been unable to substantiate any previous claims of torture in Lithuania.

2. Post has no reason to suspect any political motivation in Ramanauskas's case, nor do we have any indication that his testimony is being specifically sought. The Lithuanian constitution provides for an independent judiciary, and the government respects this provision in practice. We have no knowledge of any Lithuanian court cases being prosecuted solely on the basis of political considerations.

3. In reference to Ramanauskas's case, co-conspirator Enrikas Daktaras was arrested on April 9, 2003 in a joint operation by U.S. and Lithuanian law enforcement officers. Daktaras and three other Lithuanians were suspected of sending drugs and counterfeit dollars in the United States. We are aware of at least two other suspects who were also arrested by U.S. authorities in the United States. The USG has a clear interest in the prosecution of Daktaras and any co-conspirators. Enrikas Daktaras was convicted on narcotics and counterfeiting charges and is currently serving a six-year prison sentence. Given Daktaras' extensive criminal record, the ongoing investigation by Kaunas police is not surprising.

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